



Mr. Jim Watson, Mayor
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario
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Chief Peter Sloly, Chief of Police
Ottawa Police Service
474 Elgin Street
peter.sloly@ottawa.ca

February 1, 2022

Dear Mr. Mayor and Chief Sloly:

The Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Committee (IDEA) of the Old Ottawa South Community Association condemns the current protest in Downtown Ottawa and your handling of it as the Ottawa Police Service and the City of Ottawa.

We are one of many voices around Ottawa expressing concern about the actions in our city since the weekend. As a result of the disturbing and distressing behaviours carried out by the protesters Ottawa citizens do not feel safe. The display of racist, homophobic, and anti-Semitic banners and flags associated with the most violent moments in our history are unacceptable in any situation. We and our neighbours are afraid to go outside or anywhere near downtown as we do not feel protected by the police.

As citizens of the city we demand that you take action to stop this now.

We are concerned to see how the authorities are dealing with this serious situation, which is keeping its citizens in a state of siege. This is not how protests in Ottawa are usually handled, and the actions of the police are a glaring example of a double standard.

As members of a community organisation committee dedicated to promoting the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, we understand first-hand the need for people to assert their individual freedoms. That is a condition for leading a fulfilling life. But no democracy in the world allows its citizens to exercise freedoms without constraints. With every freedom comes responsibility – to ourselves, to our neighbours, to our country.

Sincerely,

IDEA Committee, The Old Ottawa South Community Association

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